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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY 14, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for February 14, 2006. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

OZGUR GUNDEM: Iran government administration reportedly took health precautions against bird flu in its border area with Turkey.

CUMHURIYET / ZAMAN / OZGUR GUNDEM / SABAH / RADIKAL: Following Forensic Medicine Authority's (FMA) confirmation that some of the bones found in the mass graves in Diyarbakir's Kulp district (see press summary 02/13) belonged to two of the 11 villagers who disappeared during the military operations of 1994, Sezgin Tanrikulu, Chairperson of Diyarbakir Bar Association, said that an effective investigation process should be reopened to probe the case and the prosecutor must file a complaint against Bolu Commando Brigade. Ozgur Gundem clarified the fact that DNA tests on the bones of (only) two of the 11 people have been confirmed by FMA as matching with the samples taken from their families (see press summary 02/13). Reyahan Yalcindag, Deputy National Chairperson of the Human Rights Association, noted that, despite families of the villagers having received compensation from the European Court (on an unspecified date), the perpetrators of the incident have not been found yet. Sabah daily reported Sezgin Tanrikulu's claims that separately 11 people also disappeared in the same area.

ZAMAN / CUMHURIYET: Van Yuzuncu Yil University Rector Yucel Askin paid a visit to the national headquarters of the IP (Worker's Party) and met the General Secretary, Ferit Ilsever, to extend his appreciation to the party administrators for their interest in his case.

ZAMAN / HURRIYET / SABAH: Funeral of Kani Yilmaz, who was killed in a car bomb in Iraq's Suleymaniyah province (see press summary 02/13), has been held at Sanliurfa's Ceylanpinar district in Turkey.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The daily reported that, as February 15 drew close (see press summary 02/13), tanks of the Sirnak Cannon Battalion have started cruising in the streets of Sirnak's Cizre district following yesterday's protest activities reportedly to "intimidate" people. Meanwhile, PKK's chief headquarters denounced February 15 which marked the 7th anniversary of Abdullah Ocalan's arrest and his bringing back to Turkey by authorities. PKK reportedly made a call to the people to "boycott a life that was going on without Abdullah Ocalan."

OZGUR GUNDEM: Abdullah Ocalan's hand-written petition asking for opening of his retrial process has been received by Ankara's 11th Heavy Penalty Court.

HURRIYET / SABAH: Fourteen people have been wounded as a result of a blast caused by a bomb left in an Istanbul supermarket which belonged to an AKP (Justice and Development Party) deputy. PKK claimed responsibility for the incident.

HURRIYET / SABAH: An avalanche took place on a road between Tunceli and Erzincan provinces. Teams have started efforts to clear the snow covered road. The authorities announced that no information has been received as to whether any car has been buried under the huge avalanche which reportedly caused a 20-meter-high wall of snow.

SABAH: PM Erdogan, bothered by the crisis triggered by his uttering slang words to a protesting farmer during a chance meeting in Mersin with the angry farmer, reportedly told the ministers in a council meeting, "I was taken unawares and could not control my nerves when the farmer spoke in an arrogant manner despite that I was the one to let him (the farmer) come near and speak his mind."

SABAH: Osman Ocalan, brother of Abdullah Ocalan, reportedly had a heart attack in the northern Iraq. Ocalan was hospitalized in Iraq's Arbil province.

SABAH: Istanbul's Bilgi University will hold a conference between March 11 and 12 under the following topic: "Turkey's Kurdish Issue, and Exploring Ways to Solve the Issue through Civil and Democratic Means."

SABAH: Istanbul's Beyoglu First Instance Court solicited

counseling from the Istanbul Kurdish Institute in a January 2006-dated letter about the meaning of a Kurdish word, which meant "Revolution" in English. Reportedly, a person applied to the court to change his name as "Sores" in Kurdish.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Serious shortage of teachers in southeastern Turkey has reportedly been gravely affecting children's school life. 1,300 teachers are needed only for schools in the Mus province.

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